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# ON TAP

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## *USE WATER WISELY*

If you have lived in Southern California for any length of time, you are aware that there has been a consistent message from almost every water agency to “use water wisely.” Said differently, “don’t waste water.”

This message is more meaningful this year than perhaps any previous year. Southern California is heavily dependent on “imported water.” This is particularly true for south Orange County where water agencies are supplied with water taken from the Colorado River, and sometimes the State Water Project (water taken from the northern part of California and delivered to Southern California via the California Aqueduct).

Water availability for Southern California is a constant concern for the Metropolitan Water District (MET), the large water supply agency for most of Southern California. MET’s planning for the adequate supply of water isn’t just a single year issue, but rather a long look, taking into account projected growth and water use. All retail water providers, such as Trabuco Canyon Water District, provide monthly reports that are used for water demand analysis and supply projections.

While it is projected that water supplies for Southern California are adequate this year, concern grows as the period of time continues where no substantial rainfall occurs. This is due to the fact that the current supply of water is taken from large reservoirs of water

(Diamond Lake, Lake Matthews, etc.) at the rate which occurs during average rainfall, and the water is not being replenished. This makes the coming “rainy season of 2008” very crucial. If significant rainfall does not occur, or in the case of Northern California snow pack levels do not increase, then the supply of water for Southern California could become a significant concern.

How is this concern being addressed?

At the state level, Governor Schwarzenegger has proposed a Strategic Growth Plan that includes investments in additional surface water storage, a comprehensive fix of the Bay Delta, water use efficiency, and ecosystem protection. The Strategic Growth Plan was unveiled during the governor’s State of the State speech in January of this year.

MET has been consistent in supporting retail agencies that have taken the initiative to increase water supplies from alternate sources, or increase water storage. Trabuco Canyon Water District currently is expanding water to its Reclaimed Water System by augmenting the water supply with water that is recovered from irrigation runoff; this water is called dry season water. This water is used for irrigation of homeowner association’s common area and golf course fairways. To the extent the Reclaimed Water System can be maintained and expanded without being supplemented with imported domestic (drinking) water, the

district assists MET with decreasing the demand for imported domestic water.

The District has been notified by Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWDOC), which is the wholesale billing agency for MET, that districts that participate in the Interim Agricultural Water Program (IAWP) will experience a reduction in the water supply allocation for participating agricultural customers by 30% effective January 1, 2008. This is the first time in the history of the IAWP that a supply reduction allocation has occurred. The District currently has three agricultural customers; it is unknown at this time the impact this will have on their respective businesses.

The District has also implemented its Conservation Encouragement Rate Program for all its residential and agricultural customers. This is essentially a tiered rate structure designed to make consumers aware of how much water is used, and hopefully used wisely. This is also considered a Best Management Practice by MET.

What might we anticipate in the future if the concern about water supply continues? As with any business, MET has fixed costs. These costs are recovered through the unit price of the commodity they sell. In the case of MET, it is the water they sell which is measured by the acre foot (one foot of water which would cover one acre). If less water is delivered due to supply reduction allocations to all retail agencies, then it might be anticipated the unit price from MET would be increased. In turn, retail agencies would pass this cost on to their respective customers.

If you connect the dots concerning information about water supply in the State, the message is very clear: "Use Water Wisely."

For information about what you can do to use water wisely, visit:

[www.bewaterwise.com](http://www.bewaterwise.com)

The Regular Board Meeting is held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the District office located at 32003 Dove Canyon Drive, Trabuco Canyon. The public is encouraged to attend.

### **BOARD HIGHLIGHTS**

- ◇ August 15, 2007 – Received a presentation regarding the Poseidon Desalination Project.
- ◇ Discussed a proposal relating to community education.
- ◇ Appointed an Ad Hoc Committee to review the reclaimed/recycled water supply allocation.
- ◇ Approved an Addendum to the 2005 Urban Water Management Plan.
- ◇ Approved the July 2007 revised Water, Wastewater, and Reclaimed Water Analysis for R. J. Homes, Tract No. 16677.
- ◇ Approved change orders for the Dry Season Water Recovery Project (Dove Canyon and Tick Creek Pump Station Construction).
- ◇ Authorized the purchase of a Solar Bee circulator for Dove Lake.
- ◇ Received a status report regarding Rose Canyon and Lang Wells Upgrades to Treatment Facilities.
- ◇ Received a status relating to the Robinson Ranch Road Recycled Water Distribution System Expansion.
- ◇ Received information regarding the Municipal Water District of Orange.

*ON TAP* is published and distributed by TCWD. We welcome your comments, suggestions and questions. Please call or write

Sharon E. Smith, Editor

TCWD's *ON-TAP*

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